

Garment Care & the Environment

Garment care and the environment—Where are we and where are we going?

Your cleaner’s goal in garment care is to maintain your clothes professionally while taking care of the environment and the employees of the business.

The garment care industry has changed in the past and will continue to change with future developments. Technology, chemicals and cleaning methodologies are all changing in this industry.

Some of the changes have been the result of new environmental and worker safety rules drycleaners must follow. Drycleaners operate under three main environmental regulations:

- 1. Clean Air Act and Amendments, which govern perc drycleaners and petroleum drycleaners.
- 2. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, encompassing waste handling, storage and disposal.
- 3. State of Indiana Spill Reporting Rule, which covers significant spills that must be reported and cleaned up.



To help Indiana cleaners comply with the regulations, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), in cooperation with the Indiana Drycleaning and Laundry Association (IDLA), has:

- Created user-friendly compliance manuals,
- Conducted compliance workshops,
- Provided phone and on-site assistance to cleaners, and
- Developed the Indiana 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program to recognize environmentally responsible cleaners.

The garment care industry will continue to search for new cleaning methods and technologies. The industry and government are watching recent promising developments .

What is drycleaning?

Drycleaning is the process of cleaning garments in a machine with a drycleaning solvent and detergent. The solvent contains no water; therefore, it is called “dry” cleaning.

The cleaning operation takes place in a large machine that tumbles the garments, similar to a front-loading dryer many people have at home. The machines are larger and much more sophisticated than home washers and dryers.

Most cleaners now use refrigerated dry-to-dry machines. These machines clean and dry the garments without the operator having to transfer the clothes to a dryer. The dirty garments go in the machine dry, and come out clean and dry.

The refrigerated portion of the machine is a system that reclaims virtually all the solvent from the cleaning and drying operations.

How can I find an environmentally aware cleaner?

Ask your cleaners some of the questions are listed on the inside of this brochure. Or call IDEM for the state’s most current list of environmental leaders in the drycleaning industry.

If you have further questions or need a list of environmental cleaners

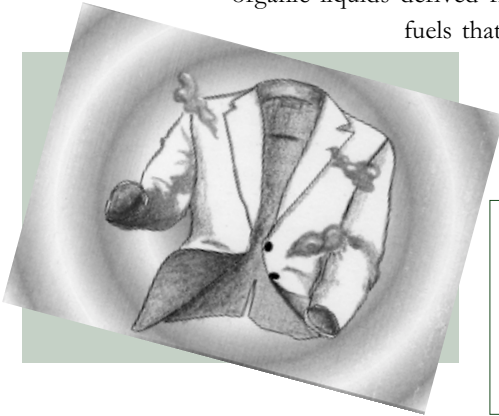
Call the Indiana Department of Environmental Management at (800) 451-6027, press 0 and ask for extension 2-8172, or dial (317) 232-8172. Visit IDEM’s drycleaning Web site at www.state.in.us/idem/ctap.

The reclaimed solvent is recycled for later use. The solvent is filtered and cleaned through distillation before it is reused, so that dirty solvent is not used to clean your garments. In fact, the drycleaning industry was one of the first to incorporate in-process recycling.

What is drycleaning solvent?

Drycleaning solvent is the liquid material used to clean your garments. Most drycleaning solvents are organic liquids derived from fossil fuels that are manu-

factured for their



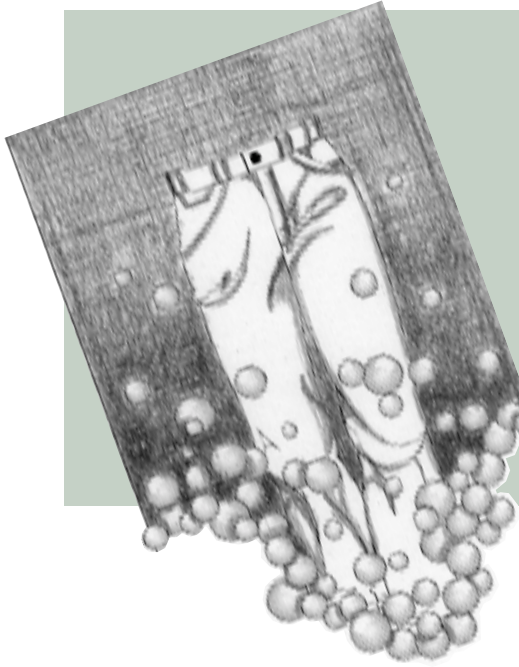
Spot cleaning, dry cleaning and wet cleaning are designed to remove soils and stains. Garment care professionals use a variety of techniques to clean fabrics.

cleaning and degreasing properties. Drycleaning solvents have been used to clean clothes for more than 50 years.

About 90 percent of drycleaners use the chlorinated hydrocarbon solvent called perchloroethylene (perc). The remaining 10 percent use a petroleum-based solvent.

Like many other substances used at home and in industry, perc is a toxic chemical. Cleaners must follow rules and regulations regarding perc to protect their employees and the environment. Most cleaners do their best to handle perc responsibly. Since there may be long-term effects from working around toxic chemicals, cleaners must minimize these risks by preventing leaks and vapor releases.





What is professional wet cleaning? How is it different than washing clothes at home?

Wet cleaning is an alternative method of garment cleaning. Instead of using drycleaning solvent, your cleaner will sometimes use water, which often has been called the universal solvent.

Through the controlled use of agitation, heat, and soap and water, many garments labeled DRYCLEAN ONLY may be cleaned in water. Special machines, soaps, chemicals and/or processes are used to keep garments looking like new.

Many garments can be cleaned successfully with water. Your cleaner uses garment knowledge and care labels to decide whether to use water or drycleaning solvent.

Many cleaners have been using wet cleaning techniques for years to clean certain fabrics and garments.

Are there dangerous vapors in drycleaned clothes?

Not normally. Proper cleaning techniques should return garments essentially free of solvent and odors.

Odors in professionally cleaned garments are rare. If there is an offensive odor in a garment, return it to your cleaner immediately.

Is my cleaner environmentally responsible?

- It's hard for you to know if your cleaner is doing all it can to protect the environment. If you got this brochure from your cleaner, the business is probably environmentally responsible. If you would like to know what actions your cleaner is taking to protect the environment, here are some questions to ask:
1. Are you participating in the Indiana 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program for Drycleaners?
 2. Are you or any member of your staff a Certified Environmental Drycleaner™?
 3. Is your drycleaning machine a refrigerated dry-to-dry system that captures solvent and recycles it for reuse?
 4. Are you handling your hazardous waste responsibly by making sure it is recycled or treated properly by a licensed treatment, storage and disposal facility?
 5. Do you wet clean garments when possible?
 6. What kind of recycling program do you have?

What is the Indiana 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program?

The Indiana 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program is voluntary. It ranks participating drycleaners on a scale of one to five stars. Cleaners earn each star by meeting specific performance criteria. To qualify, a drycleaner must apply to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) for consideration. Drycleaners must re-apply to the program every two years.

The program recognizes those drycleaners willing to do more for the environment and worker safety than the rules require. These drycleaners are going above and beyond the rules to protect the environment, their employees and their neighbors and customers.

IDEM announces awards on a quarterly basis. Each star builds on the previous star requirements. For example, a drycleaner cannot be a four-star drycleaner without satisfying the requirements of the first three stars.

5-STAR PROGRAM CRITERIA

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The drycleaner must strive to reduce its use of drycleaning solvent. The drycleaner must respond openly and honestly within a reasonable time frame to neighbors' and customers' questions regarding drycleaning solvent and other drycleaning issues. It must use a hauler for all hazardous waste, even if it qualifies as a Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator.

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The drycleaner must accept hangers and plastic drycleaning bags returned by customers for recycling at all stores. It must keep a supply of this brochure available to the public. It must annually conduct hazard communication training for all employees.

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The drycleaner must use recycled bags and/or reusable bags. The drycleaner must keep abreast of changes in rules by annually attending an IDEM drycleaning compliance training session or equivalent. The drycleaner must annually report drycleaning, wet cleaning and solvent mileage information to IDEM.

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The drycleaner must be in operation at least one year. It must consistently achieve a 450 solvent mileage and post the solvent mileage and percent of wet cleaning on a poster provided by IDEM at all stores for customers to see.

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The drycleaner must have at least one person achieve the Certified Environmental Drycleaner™ designation from the International Fabricare Institute or achieve another equivalent environmental certification. The drycleaner must demonstrate environmental leadership to the 5-Star review committee. Examples of leadership include, but are not limited to: demonstrating a commitment to environmental improvements in the drycleaning industry, installing innovative equipment, achieving exceptional solvent mileage and/or consistently cleaning with a high percentage of wet cleaning. The drycleaner must consistently achieve a solvent mileage of 750 or more for at least the last 12 months or mentor five other drycleaners. Mentoring includes ongoing phone and on-site assistance regarding the drycleaners' environmental and worker safety issues.

Why would my cleaner want to participate in the Indiana 5-Star Environmental Recognition Program?

Professional cleaners care about their neighbors, customers, employees and environment. Most cleaners are family-owned businesses that want to be responsible community members. Also, because many consumers care about our environment, cleaners can use the 5-Star program to distinguish themselves from the competition.



What is the Certified Environmental Drycleaner™ designation?

The Certified Environmental Drycleaner™ designation is awarded by the International Fabricare Institute only after the cleaner has passed a comprehensive examination covering environmental regulations. The CED designation is good for three years.



What should I do if I have concerns about a cleaner in my neighborhood?

If you have any questions about a cleaner's commitment to the environment, health or safety, please talk to the business owner or manager first. He or she should be able to address your concerns. If you have additional concerns, contact IDEM's Compliance and Technical Assistance Program at (317) 232-8172.